

These are notes and comments about  
the

Thomas St. warehouse... Sept. 26, 1984.

#### HISTORY

"chemical fire on Apr. 11, 1983"<sup>1</sup>

"an estimated 20,000 containers...covered the entire gamut of hazard classes, i.e. - flammable, corrosive, oxidizer, poisonous, explosive, radioactive, poison gas, dangerous when wet, irritant, compressed gas, etc."<sup>2</sup>

"On July 15, 1983, Judge Stanton ordered the removal of all material from the warehouse, by the responsible parties under State supervision."<sup>3</sup>

Since July 15, 1983 the DEP has been responsible for having an on-site coordinator and guard service at the site.<sup>4</sup>

"This State supervised removal continued through 1983 with no fewer than two extensions of the court order to remove said material."<sup>5</sup>

"a third court hearing brought about a March 31, 1984 deadline for the complete removal of all remaining material."<sup>6</sup>

"the responsible parties had made little or no progress"<sup>7</sup>

"The April 27, 1984 inspection revealed the general neglect of the facility and a greatly deteriorated situation."<sup>8</sup> However, the DEP should have known of the condition of the building all along because they had an on-site coordinator there.

"Some of the more dangerous material had previously not been observed due to the sheer number of containers and volume of the material there."<sup>9</sup>

"material was discovered to be mislabeled or could not be identified...containers deteriorating and incompatible wastes were stored in close proximity. The inspectors also identified explosive compounds. The Department of Environmental Protection inspectors determined that an imminent hazard existed and recommended that immediate abatement measures be taken."<sup>10</sup>

On May 22, 1984, Stanton issued a restraining order barring Signo employees from the site. Nine days later the DEP took over the cleanup and began inventory, testing, bulking and decontamination of the warehouse.<sup>11</sup>

"On May 31, 1984, the project was given Emergency Authorization to use

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"During May and June, a firm under contract with the Department performed an inventory...then in July, the Department conducted an auction...The auction was not as successful as anticipated, consequently, less than 10% of the material was removed."<sup>13</sup>

"the Department...now has until December 10, 1984 to complete this project."<sup>14</sup>

#### CURRENT CONDITIONS

"Each of the five floors contains a combination of organics, inorganics, oxidizers, acids, alkalines, off-spec laboratory chemicals, reagents, pesticides, herbicides, and numerous quantities of dangerous highly reactive materials."<sup>15</sup> This contradicts previous claims that the materials had been segregated. "By August 6, 1984, the inventory, hazard classification (i.e. flammable, corrosive, explosive etc) and segregation of the warehouse contents had been completed. All of the material that could not be identified, had been analyzed and segregated by hazard class."<sup>16</sup>

PCB's discovered.<sup>17</sup>

"Adequate safety boundaries have not been determined"<sup>18</sup> Even though the DEP has been on the site for more than a year and a half. (Cf. need for an evacuation plan.)

"All material requiring sampling and waste characterization shall be...sampled. Following sampling and compatibility analyses, the waste material can be brought to a designated area, for solid/liquid bulking"<sup>19</sup> Supposedly, the DEP and their contractor had been doing this all summer.

The contractor must have a mobile laboratory and develop a Waste Characterization Plan.<sup>20</sup> Supposedly all the testing had been done.

"Removal of all pyrophorics, reactives and explosives. These materials exist on several floors of the warehouse"<sup>21</sup> Supposedly, all of the segregation of the materials had already been done. Furthermore the State Police was to do the job. "the State Police Bomb Squad will during the week of September 10, 1984 remove all of the volatile explosives."<sup>22</sup> "Most of the reactive and potentially explosive compounds including picric acid, liquid potassium/sodium alloy, pyrophoric liquids and calcium metal were removed and

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disposed."<sup>23</sup>

"Until these materials [pyrophorics, reactives and explosives] are removed a severe explosion potential exists."<sup>24</sup>

"The contractor will be responsible for all sampling, waste categorization and disposal analysis that will enable the State to choose an applicable disposal contractor"<sup>25</sup>

"Identification and categorization of "known" laboratory chemicals, reagents, pesticides, medical supplies etc. There are large quantities of this material which will require effort and space to inventory and categorize before disposal can be scheduled...portions will require repacking in laboratory paks for disposal...Processing of these materials shall include:segregation...sampling,waste disposal recommendations, repacking or bulking, waste disposal analysis."<sup>26</sup> Supposedly all this was already done.

"all floors steamed cleaned"<sup>27</sup>

Start up was to begin Sept. 26, 1984. Have they started?<sup>28</sup>

#### POSSIBLE CONTRACTORS

O.H. Materials Inc. Applied Chemical Environmental Services New England  
Pollution Control Clean Ventures<sup>29</sup>

Previous contractor was Clean Industry 170 Border St. East Boston, Ma  
02128<sup>30</sup>

"Stabilization is required again as a result of recent sampling which showed that drums and other containers in the warehouse had been mislabeled...OH [which replaced Clean Ind.] will be repacking...resegregating...moving potential explosives to the 4th floor...and moving radioactives to the 4th floor"<sup>31</sup>

Is the state going to sue Clean Ind.? Why did the R.F.P. include the work that OH is presently doing?

Evacuation Plan to be done by the DEP. PCB sampling to be done inside building, parking lot and outside on sidewalk."<sup>32</sup>

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CLEAN INDUSTRY

TERMINATED AUGUST 31, 1984<sup>33</sup>

Aug. 17 one forklift broke down, other overheated every half hour

Aug 18 adequate personnel not on site, supervisor left at lunch time, chemist left early, OSC forced to cease all work early( at 2:30) the two cleaners spent day removing trash<sup>34</sup>

Aug 25 chemist left early, OSC forced to cease work early (3:00) <sup>35</sup>

Yet, budget shows people who left early were still paid by state. Supervisor \$543 per day, \$675 Sat. Chemist \$662.50 per day, \$850 Sat. Cleaner \$375 per day, \$450 Sat to remove trash Avg. \$4,000 per day plus \$850 for equipment this is a rip-off!!!

"physical waste characteristic data of unknown liquids prepared by Clean Ind. was arranged in such a manner that it was not compatible with their (Rollins) waste classification criteria"<sup>36</sup>

The auction cost time. Drums were moved around for it and lost! "The chemists had to manually rearranged (sic) the list in a manner that was acceptable to Rollins criteria. In addition, since the drums had been moved several times during the auction, considerable time was lost locating each drum."<sup>37</sup>

The testing by Clean Industry and the DEP was a waste of time because it was faulty. "the first 30 samples drawn from drums presumed to contain a "known" crude oil as labeled contained an unknown liquid. These drums were pulled from the staging area and placed in the basement where they will later be sampled and analyzed for waste characteristics...20% to 30% of the labeled known materials proved to contain unknown liquid and had to be removed from the first Rollins load."<sup>38</sup>

More segregation planned<sup>39</sup>

"the non-hazardous materials that occupied the entire first floor north wing had to be removed"<sup>40</sup>

""The loading of the dumpster [with no-hazardous wastes] was delayed when several of the presumed non-hazardous fiber drums were found to contain laboratory packs and had to be removed from the load."<sup>41</sup>

Auction: materials bought by Right Chemical Co. A. Kennedy Rombach  
*Chemical L*